

Southern California Water Committee, Inc.

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June 1, 1999

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The Honorable Gray Davis
Governor
State of California
State Capitol, 1st Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Davis:

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INTERESTS CRUCIAL TO RESOLVING BAY-DELTA

A May 1999 *USA Water News* article quoted the Director of Water Resources, Tom Hannigan as saying he doesn't see the need for a Peripheral Canal...ever. Your Resource Secretary, Mary Nichols was quoted as agreeing with this sentiment at a recent meeting of the Association of California Water Agencies. If they are referring to the old concept of a peripheral canal, we agree. However, we are deeply concerned they are recommending permanently dismissing CALFED's isolated conveyance alternative. At the very least, statements such as these are premature and threaten to undercut a process that might offer the last opportunity in helping solve California's water problem.

Southern California depends on a full third of its imported supplies from the State Water Project. A cornerstone of Southern California's successful \$500 billion economy and well being is a high quality and dependable water supply from the Delta. As you know, it is absolutely essential that our water supplies be dependable and be able to meet current and future drinking water standards.

A dual conveyance system as defined in Alternative Three was identified by CALFED in the final EIS/EIR last year as technically the best alternative. The dual conveyance alternative was said to be most promising for California in many ways, including water quality, fisheries, water supply opportunities, and operational flexibility. We believe this alternative still offers the best assurances for Southern California.

We agree with Tom Hannigan's assertion that recycling and groundwater storage programs and transfers should be part of the overall solution. However, Southern California which already has some of the most aggressive water recycling and groundwater recharge programs in California depends greatly on high quality, low salinity supplies from the Delta for its success. As water sources become more saline, the options for recycling become increasingly prohibitive and costly. The solution to the California water problem requires a mix of possible solutions, including an isolated facility.

A cooperative effort of business, government, water agencies, agriculture, and public interests.

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Southern California demands the assurances that it will have a high quality water supply. We are willing to shoulder our fair share of the financial responsibility for a solution that will assure Southern California's needs while also meeting CALFED's overall objectives as a whole. However, unless another solution is put forth that will offer real assurances of water quality and dependability, we feel that it would be a mistake to take off the table perhaps the best overall solution to these issues.


More importantly, we want a solution that is not only balanced, but is achieved through technically supportable conclusions and not arrived at through political considerations that seem to placate vocal shortsighted interest groups. Recommending second or third best options is contrary to CALFED's own solution principles and not the way to manage California's water resources.

The CALFED process must continue with all elements on the table. Southern California expects nothing less than a fair and balanced solution, as was promised when this process started. CALFED must proceed with a balanced approach that includes linkages and assurances that all necessary planning activities be undertaken to insure a fair review of new storage options along with the necessary studies that support a dual conveyance system.

You stated that no one would get all they want from CALFED. We want construction of the isolated facility to begin tomorrow; however in the spirit of compromise we are willing to wait for the "right time" to begin serious consideration of the isolated facility, but we must protest the total elimination of this alternative.

We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss these important issues of concern to Southern California.

Very truly yours,


Stephen A. Zapotichny
Chairman

cc: Senator Jim Costa
Assemblyman Michael Machado
Lester Snow, CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Linda Adams, Deputy Legislative Secretary
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